

江戸川乱歩異人館

The world
of novelists
and the likes
is separated
from that of
ordinary souls.
Besides hearing
and witnessing
peculiar occur-
rences, I often
encounter
extraordinary,
enigmatic oddities.



The *Hard* Odmy
Kogorou Akechi x Strangulation Man
Murder on D**** Hill (First Part)

Hole man,
Seat man,
to name
but a few...



INDEED,
HIS NAME
MUST BE
MENTIONED...



And were I
to name
a deviant
amidst
the deviants,



The Third Oddity
Kogorou Akechi × Strangulation Man
Murder on D**** Hill (First Part)

*絞殺 Death by strangling
殺殺 Death by strangulation
絞殺 Death by strangling
絞殺 Death by strangulation
絞殺 Death by strangling

whatever-project.com

TL: Tranquil Melancholy

PR1: Soeren

PR2: Tina, Tranquil Melancholy, Yuki

CL: Jenn, KateDeathWish, Lapis, TM

LT: Tranquil Melancholy

QC: Tranquil Melancholy

Greetings Readers,

I usually do not write a lengthy recruiting note but considering this title's audience I suppose it is apt:

I am still looking for a dedicated translator and proofreaders—both context- and English-proofreaders—for this series. Now, it is not as if there have not been any applicants up until now, but it is that they have all been found wanting.

As you can see, it has been many months since Chapter 2; I am almost always drowning under my life responsibilities and ambitions. I rely heavily on my competent members. However, as competent as they are, this series remains a challenge and nobody is able to accept my baton with confidence. Surely the generous white space here allows at least this much verbosity: even in one's worsted, melancholic solitude, this tranquil body feels tragically desolate looking at the abject, multiple repetition of one's own handle in the credits above, thus, visit Whatever's website and send in your application if you can—click the paper airplane button.

Translator & Context Proofreader: In addition to the description on Whatever's Join Us page: you must be fluent in Japanese enough to comprehend Japanese dated prose; able to notice subtle differences in tones; able to eloquently, but not excessively, reproduce the original meanings/moods/implications/nuances/styles seamlessly in your translation.

English Proofreader (/Editor): In addition to the description on Whatever's Join Us page: you must be able to distinguish between dated and modern English spellings/words, able to eloquently, but not excessively, reproduce the intended meanings/moods/implications/nuances/styles in your edits.

For the rest of the available positions—Cleaner, Typesetter, SFX-letterer—please read the descriptions on Whatever's Join Us page.

Tranquil Melancholy

江戸川乱歩異人館



It was
one sultry
early-
September
evening
several
years
back.



I was sipping
my iced coffee
inside the cafe
I patronised
called
Hakubaiken,
located midway
down the main
street of
P**** Hill.



There,
occasioned by
my mindless,
inquisitive
predisposition,
was I entangled
in a bizarre case.

As I aimlessly looked outside the window, my eyes eventually fell upon this single-house used bookstore; a while passed before I noticed something odd was going on.



For a half hour, without counting, I had spotted several thieves sneaking out of the store in succession, yet the normally expected quake of rage never broke out...



THAT'S
THE
FOURTH
ONE.







THIRTY MINUTES...MM...
EVEN ASSUMING
THAT HE LEFT
THROUGH THE
BACKDOOR
AND HASN'T
RETURNED
SINCE, STILL,
IT'S RATHER
ODD.



AROUND THIRTY
MINUTES AGO I
SAW THE INNER
SHOJI SLIDING
SHUT, SO THERE
SHOULD BE
SOMEBODY
INSIDE
AT LEAST.



IT CERTAINLY
GETS MY
BUTTERFLIES
IN A FRENZY...

SOME-
THING
SMELLS
FISHY.
DUN YA
THINK?

My
coffee

茶 20
味噌 30
水 20

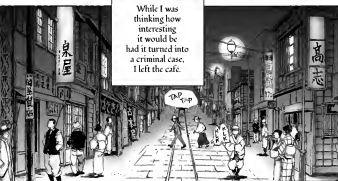
YOUR
BUTTER-
FLIES...?



WHAT
D'YOU THINK?
WHY DON'T
WE CHECK
IT OUT?



While I was thinking how interesting it would be had it turned into a criminal case, I left the café.



HELLO !!

NOT REALLY... I'VE ONLY CAUGHT SIGHT OF HER TWO OR THREE TIMES BEFORE. MY MEMORY IS EXCEPTIONAL WHEN IT COMES TO BEAUTIES.

...!? IS SHE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE?

YOU KNOW, THE STORE OWNER'S LADY IS A BEAUTY WHO STEAL LIMITS EVER SO ALLURING FRAGRANCE





HEEY.
ANY-
BODY
IN
HERE?

EX-
CUSE
HEEY.



BUT I'M
CERTAIN
I SAW
THE INNER
SHUT-
TERS
SLIDING
SHUT.



IT
WOULD
SEEM NO
ONE IS
TENDING
TO THE
STORE...



H-HEY,
I DON'T
THINK
THAT'S
APPRO-
PRIATE...



P-PARDON
OUR
INTRUSION,
WE DIDN'T
KNOW
YOU WERE
RESTING—

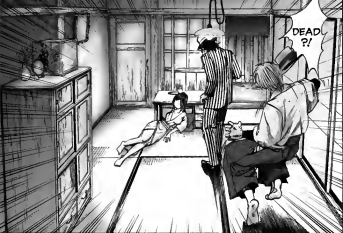


CALM
DOWN.
TAKE
A GOOD
LOOK
AT HER.





**SHE IS
DEAD!!**





AS I
SUSPECTED,
THIS IS
A MURDER
CASE.



WHAT IS
THIS MAN?
THERE IS
A CORPSE...
AND A MURDER
SCENE RIGHT
BEFORE HIS EYES,
YET HE REMAINS
SO CALM...



HMM?
MOREOVER,
IT HASN'T BEEN
LONG SINCE
SHE DREW
HER LAST
BREATH.



SO MY
PREMONI-
TION
WAS
RIGHT ON THE
MARK.

A
MURDER
CASE
!!!

WHAT A
TERRIBLY
BEAUTIFUL
MANNER
OF
DEATH...

NOR CAN
I SMELL
ALCOHOL
OR DRUGS
ON HER

WHILE HER
CLOTHES
ARE SOME-
WHAT IN A
DISHEVELLED
STATE,
THERE IS
NO SIGN OF
STRUGGLE
THAT I
CAN SEE.

WHAT
ARE ALL
THESE
FRESH
BRUISES
ON HER
BODY, I
WONDER?



But there I was,
frozen before
reality, transfixed
by the mode of
detection which
this man's
bearing bespoke...



Indeed, I would
outstrip any
discourses in
relation to crime
or detection.

WHO ON
EARTH
IS HE?



Yet,
behind a single
thin shop inside
one house lay
the lifeless body
of a cruelly
murdered woman.
what an irony...

Out there, the
main street
nonchalantly
continued on
with its constant,
flagrantly
peaceful life...



THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Inspector Namikoshi

COULD
YOU GIVE
ME THE
DETAILS
OF THE
EVENTS
THAT
TRANS-
PIRED?

Before long,
the police
and their
medical
examiner
appeared.



TOLD
YOU

I'D SAY
IT'S BEEN
ONE HOUR
SINCE THE
VICTIM
PASSED

ARE
YOU
CERT-
TAIN?

We gave
summarised
statements of
the circumstances
which led to
the discovery
of the body.

AROUND
SEVEN
O'CLOCK,
I SAW THE
SHOY SLIDE
SHUT





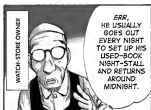
AH, IF IT'S HIS WHEREABOUTS... THE WATCH STORE NEXT DOOR CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME INFORMATION.

AND WHERE IS THE SHOP OWNER?



ERR, NORMALLY IT'D BE SOMEWHERE ON THE MAIN STREET OF UENO. BUT WHERE EXACTLY HE WENT FOR TONIGHT, I KNOW NOT, SIR.

WHERE IS THAT?



WATCH-STORE OWNER

ERR, HE USUALLY GOES OUT EVERY NIGHT TO SET UP HIS USED-BOOK NIGHT-STALL AND RETURNS AROUND MIDNIGHT.



HMMM, THE CRIMINAL SMOOTHLY MURDERED THE VICTIM MAKING NOT EVEN A SINGLE SOUND HUH...

AND THEN HE ESCAPED THROUGH THE BACK ALLEY? IF THAT WERE THE CASE, SOMEONE MUST HAVE SPOTTED A SUSPICIOUS FIGURE LEAVING.



ERR, NO SIR, I DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING UNUSUAL.

HAVE YOU HEARD SOME NOISE AROUND AN HOUR AGO?



I DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING, SIR.

The tabi-store owner next door stated likewise that he too had not heard any noise.



WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! WHO GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO COMMANDEER THE POLICE INVESTIGATION!!

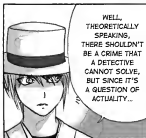
YOU THERE... CHECK THESE BRUISE MARKS TOO.



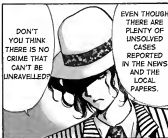
GOODNESS, WE CERTAINLY GOT OURSELVES INVOLVED IN A TROUBLE-SOME CASE.



Notwithstanding our initial inclusion in the suspect list, we were released after the interrogation on that same night.



WELL, THEORETICALLY SPEAKING, THERE SHOULDN'T BE A CRIME THAT A DETECTIVE CANNOT SOLVE, BUT SINCE IT'S A QUESTION OF ACTUALITY...



DON'T YOU THINK THERE IS NO CRIME THAT CAN'T BE UNRAVELLED?

EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE PLENTY OF UNSOLVED CASES REPORTED IN THE NEWS AND THE LOCAL PAPERS.





KOGOROU

AKECHI.

A few days later,
I tried to probe
the case's progress
through my
judicial-reporter
friend.



sign: Edogawa

In short, there
had been no new
development
since the night
of incidence.



A MOUNTAIN
OF TOWELS WAS
THROWN IN ON
THAT ONE. EVEN
CHIEF INSPECTOR
NAMIKOSHI
COULDN'T HIDE
HIS RESIGNED
EXPRESSION.



Once again,
urged by that
inquisitive
predisposition
of mine, I set
out to play a
lone detective.



IT'S HIGHLY
UNLIKELY THAT
THE CRIMINAL
COULD ESCAPE
THROUGH THE
BACKDOOR
WITHOUT BEING
SPOTTED BY
ANYONE.



My findings
were identical
to the police's;
all the residents in
the neighbourhood
appeared to be
trustworthy,
reliable people.



THE
ALLEY
BEHIND
THE
USED
BOOK-
STORE

K L K



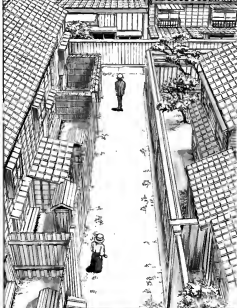
...!
ISN'T
THAT THE
SOBA-
STORE
OWNER'S
WIFE...?



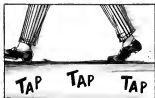


KOGOROU
AKECHI.





Before
I realised it,
I was already
tailing after
his back.





He walked towards Ueno for almost one hour.



IS THIS HIS DWELLING...?
NO...IT'S PROBABLY NOT THE CASE.



He then entered a building.



HMMM, I HAVE COME THIS FAR, MAYBE I SHOULD JUST GO IN?

I briefly contemplated my next move in front of the building..







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Originally Bump was quoting the series *Jūgūnkyō* (人々囃場) which can be literally translated as "selected places without humans"—written by Oguri Masakazu, the story is about a Japanese explorer who travelled to mysterious, eerie, unspecified places in this world. Literally this word has become a metaphor for places where no human made, often sinister. As I have mentioned before in the first chapter, it is not easy to name a chance meeting and selectively insert some old settings at the same time, so these options are as far as my current exhausted brain can come up with that flow well with the rest of the text. The *hōshi/shōshi* (fair of the Shades/damned, the underworld) —Touhou Mōchūchū.



*The shrieks,
the death throes,
is this the lair
of the Shades*?
Have I wandered
into a demented
banquet of the
damned?*







Throat
dust-dry
desiccated,
let alone
uttering
a word.
I could not
even make
a sound.

Notwithstanding,
my body,
diametrically
opposing the
voice of
righteousness,
froze solid
as if under the
paralyzing spell
of anaesthetics.

*I must
charge
down
there and
save her
at once.*

!?



D-DID
YOU
KILL
HER?!

Aah... I see.
So it was like that?!
The murder scene of
the used-bookstore
lady...was reproduced
before my very eyes...



A-
AKECHI!
...?!

*There is
no mistake...
Kogorou
Akechi,
he is the
strangulation
fiend.*

